

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 0893

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FI

SUBJECT: NORDIC SOCIAL DEMOCRATS MEET IN HELSINKI

SUMMARY: AT THE MAY 4-6 MEETING OF THE NORDIC SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES AND LABOR UNION MOVEMENTS HELD IN HELSINKI, THE MOST NEWSWORTHY EVENT TURNED OUT TO BE THE SURPRISE VISIT BY PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST LEADER MARIO SOARES WHO STOLE THE SHOW (SEE SEPTTEL) FROM THE THREE PRESENT PRIME MINISTERS OF SWEDEN, NORWAY, AND FINLAND, AND THE FORMER SUCH OF DENMARK. SWEDEN'S PALME CAST HIMSELF IN THE ROLE OF CHIEF IDEOGOGUE FOR THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, FINLAND'S SORSA EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF CSCE AND MBFR TO NORDIC SECURITY, AND NORWAY'S FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND MADE A CASE FOR DETENTE BEING GOOD ALSO FOR SMALL STATES. DENMARK'S JORGENSEN FORESAW A COMEBACK FOR THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND ELECTIONS STILL THIS YEAR.

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1. THE MAY 4-6 NORDIC CONCLAVE OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC

PARTY AND LABOR UNION MOVEMENT LEADERS IN HELSINKI STARTED OFF WITH A PREPARATORY MEETING OF THE VARIOUS SECRETARIES ON MAY 4. AT THIS MEETING IT WAS DECIDED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, TO INVITE MARIO SOARES, PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST LEADER. TO EVERYONE'S SURPRISE, SOARES ACTUALLY DID SHOW UP FOR A BRIEF NOCUTRNL VISIT AND STOLE THE HEADLINES (SEE SEPTTEL).

2. SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER PALME TOOK A LEAF FROM HIS BOOK TO BE (ON SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC IDEOLOGY BASED ON CORRESPONDENCE HE HAS HAD WITH KREISKY AND BRANDT) AND HELD FORTH ON THE VIRTUES OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AS OPPOSED TO COMMUNISM AND CAPITALISM. PALME'S MAINPOINTS WERE THAT BOTH COMMUNISM AND CAPITALISM LEAD TO CONCENTRATIONS OF POWER, BUREAUCRATIZATION, AND A REDUCED IMPACT OF THE INDIVIDUAL. SOCIAL DEMOCRACY, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS NOT ONLY A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE, ACCORDING TO PALME, BEING "HUMANE SOCIAL-SIM," BUT ALSO HAD AS ITS MAIN PURPOSE THE TRANSFER OF POWER FROM THE FEW TO THE MANY AND TO BRING ABOUT EQUALITY AMONG PEOPLE AND A REDUCTION OF TENSIONS BETWEEN NATIONS. ACCORDING TO OUR WELL PLACED SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC SOURCE, PALME WAS BASICALLY READING ONE OF HIS LETTERS AND NO TEXT OF HIS REMARKS WILL BE AVAILABLE UNTIL HIS BOOK APPEARS.

3. FINNISH PRIME MINISTER SORSA EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CSCE AND MBFR NEGOTIATIONS AND MAINTAINED THAT THEY HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT POSSIBILITIES TO INCREASE SECURITY IN THE NORTH OF EUROPE BY WAY OF REGIONAL APPROACHES -- REFERRING SPECIFICALLY TO PRESIDENT KEKKONEN'S NORTHERN NUCLEAR FREE ZONE PROPOSAL THAT HAS BEEN GATHERING DUST FOR SOME YEARS.

4. FOR NORWAY THE SPOKESMAN WAS FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND RATHER THAN PRIME MINISTER BRATTELI. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, THIS WAS BECAUSE BRATTELI WAS TIRED AND IS GETTING OLD, BUT DID NOT INDICATE THAT FRYDENLUND IS NEXT IN LINE FOR THE LEADERSHIP. FRYDENLUND CLAIMED THAT INCREASING COOPERATION BETWEEN

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SUPERPOWERS DID NOT CONSTITUTE ANY DANGER TO SMALL COUNTRIES. HE ADDED THAT THE REDUCTION OF TENSIONS HAS STRENGTHENED THE POSITION OF THE NORDIC COUNTRIES, AND GAVE AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE INCREASED POSSIBILITIES FOR SMALL NATION ACTIVITY FINLAND'S ROLE IN BRINGING ABOUT THE CSCE.

5. DANISH FORMER PRIME MINISTER JORGENSEN RECEIVED

HIS SHARE OF ATTENTION BUT DID NOT PRESENT ANY MAJOR SPEECH. HE DID INDICATE THAT HE BELIEVED THAT THE DANISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WERE MAKING A SLOW BUT STEADY COMEBACK AND EXPECTED ELECTIONS TO BE HELD IN DENMARK THIS YEAR, PROBABLY IN SEPTEMBER. (IN CONTRAST, ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, PALME HAD REFUSED TO BE DRAWN OUT ON SWEDISH ELECTION PROSPECTS, BUT HAD A SEEMED GENERALLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT HIS GOVERNMENT'S FUTURE.)

5. THIS LATEST MEETING OF NORDIC SOCIAL DEMOCRAT LEADERS WAS PRIMARILY A "BATTERY CHARGING" OPERATION. SINCE THERE WERE NO MAJOR PROBLEMS, NOTHING SPTACULAR WAS ACCOMPLISHED. THE POSITIVE WAS ACCENTUATED, AS WAS PUBLICITY, AND A GOOD TIME WAS APPARENTLY HAD BY ALL.
KREHBIEL

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